(b) the innovative steps Government propose to take to make Indian space programme self-dependent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) There are currently, more than 500 accredited users of Indian Satellites both in the public and private sectors. The public users of services of Indian satellites, Indian National Satellite System (INSAT) and Indian Remote Sensing Satellite (IRS) are Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL), Prasar Bharati and several Government Departments, viz., India Meteorological Department (IMD), National Informatics Centre (NIC), Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology, Ministry of Rural Development, etc. The private users of Indian Satellites include M/s. INTELSAT, International Telecommunication Organisation and Indian private T.V. broadcasters. While it is difficult to compute the overall revenue earned by the Government considering the various spin off activities/benefits arising from the service of these satellites, the direct revenue earned by Department of Space including the domestic and the international segments is approximately Rs. 410 crores during the 9th Plan Period.

The expenditure on INSAT and IRS satellites currently serving in orbit is Rs. 2845 crores.

(b) The Indian Space programme is directed towards development and utilisation of space technology in a self-reliant manner for socio-economic development of the country. Towards meeting this objective, development of State-of-the-art cost-effective satellites and launch vehicles is being done on a continuing basis.

Income tax net for beneficiary committees conducting work of MPLADS

4657. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the beneficiary Committees which are conducting the works of MPLAD Scheme have been brought under the purview of Income Tax;

(b) whether Government are aware that the beneficiary Committees are reluctant to take up the work because of the existing provision of Income-Tax;

(c) whether Government would consider to review the above provisions; and

(d) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Works under MPLADS are taken up on the recommendation of the Members of Parliament and are implemented by the District Heads by following the established procedures of the State Governments. The implementing agencies could be either Government or Panchayati Raj Institution or any other reputed non-governmental organisation who may be considered by the District Head as capable of implementing the work satisfactorily.

If the works are executed by the government, no tax is leviable since Article 289(1) of the Constitution exempts the income of the State from Union Taxation. If the implementing agencies are non-governmental organisations, the provision of the income-tax Act will be applicable as usual. The applicability of income-tax provision on beneficiary organisation would thus depend upon its status, whether it is government or non-governmental.

(b) and (c) No instance of beneficiary Committee's reluctance to take up work because of existing provision of Income-Tax has come to the notice of this Ministry.

(d) Does not arise.